United Nations

Press Release

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council Committee monitoring mandatory sanctions against Iraq elects officers for 1991.

- Council Committee monitoring mandatory arms embargo against South Africa also elects officers for this year.

- Secretary-General welcomes announced initiative by United States for meeting between United States Secretary of State and Iraqi Foreign Minister, next week in Switzerland.

- Chairman of Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People expresses "anguish and outrage" at recent shooting and killing of Palestinian civilians by Israeli troops.

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The Committee established by the Security Council to monitor the implementation of the mandatory sanctions imposed by the Council against Iraq this afternoon elected Peter Hohenfellner (Austria) as its Chairman for 1991.

The Committee, which is composed of all members of the Council and meets in closed session, also elected the representatives of Ecuador and Romania as Vice-Chairmen.

Established by Council resolution 661 (1990), the Committee was requested to report on its work to the Council with its observations and recommendations. In the same resolution, the Council called on all States to co-operate fully with the Committee in the fulfilment of its task, including the supply of such information as might be sought by the Committee.

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The Committee established by the Security Council by resolution 421 (1977) to monitor the mandatory arms embargo against South Africa, this afternoon elected Chinmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan (India) as its Chairman for 1991.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The Committee, which is composed of all members of the Council, also elected the representatives of Belgium and Zaire as Vice-Chairmen.

The resolution establishing the Committee was adopted by the Council as a consequence of resolution 418 (1977) in which it determined that the acquisition by South Africa of arms and related matériel constituted a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security.

By the terms of that text, the Council decided that the Committee should study ways and means by which the mandatory arms embargo could be made more effective against South Africa and to make recommendations to the Council; and to seek further information regarding the action taken by countries concerning effective implementation of the resolution.

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Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar told correspondents today that he was doing his best quietly to find a solution to the impasse in the Gulf before the 15 January deadline set by the Security Council for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

When asked if he had any comments on the recently announced initiative by the United States for a meeting between the United States Secretary of State, James A. Baker, and the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz, next week in Switzerland, Mr. Perez de Cuellar said the American move had been the right one in the sense of presenting a new option to the Iraqis which he hoped they would accept. He added that everybody had to be extremely active during the next 12 days so that military action does not take place. Mr. Perez de Cuellar said he had met today with the President of the Security Council, Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya (Zaire), and with the Ambassador of Luxembourg, Jean Feyder, since Luxembourg was now chairing the 12-nation European Community, in an effort to be in touch with all concerned.

He said he hoped to meet with the Iraqi Ambassador, Abdul Amir A. Al-Anbari, tomorrow, to explore all possibilities to avoid a military conflagration.

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The Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Absa Claude Diallo (Senegal), has expressed "anguish and outrage" at the recent shooting and the killing of Palestinian civilians and what she calls the "brutal repression by Israel" of Palestinian demonstrators.

In a letter addressed to the Secretary-General, dated 31 January, she said that on 29 December, it was reported that Israeli troops had shot and killed five Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip in what was described as the "bloodiest" clash in Gaza since last May. The press had further reported

on 30 December, she said, that the toll of wounded Palestinians on the previous day could reach as many as 250, more than 100 of them in Rajah refugee camp.

A day earlier, on 28 December, three Palestinians, including a small child, were shot by unidentified gunmen near the Israeli settlement of Gush Etzion, north of Hebron, Mrs. Diallo said. On 26 December, Israeli troops had shot and killed two Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. According to a recent report of the Data Base Project on Palestinian Human Rights, the latest killings had brought the number of Palestinians killed since the beginning of the intifadah to more than 900, she said.

On behalf of the Committee, Mrs. Diallo said it condemned the "indiscriminate killing" and injuring of Palestinian demonstrators by the Israeli army, in "its efforts to suppress the intifadah".

She called for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East conflict, as reaffirmed by the General Assembly on 6 December, in order to protect Palestinian civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories and to promote a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question.

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